



# SQUARE FOOT GARDENING

How to Grow Organic Vegetables  
and Berries in Your Garden

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# **Square Foot Gardening - How to Grow Organic Vegetables in Your Garden**

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# Introduction

This book offers you many tips and suggestions on how to grow your own square foot organic garden. This will be something that you and your loved ones can enjoy, as well as reap many benefits from. Not only will you get fresh produce, but you will also have a wonderful new hobby to enjoy for many years to come. If you are new to gardening, then this is a great book that gives you special tips and pointers to start your garden off right. Many people are looking to find ways to eat healthier so what better way than to grow your own chemical free produce. This is a great project and you will feel very proud of the accomplishments in your garden, especially when you start to see your garden grow and flourish. You will learn how to make use of smaller spaces to grow a more compact garden. Most of us do not have the large pieces of land to grow big, giant gardens, but just a little patch of soil is all you need to grow your first organic garden. Gardening also offers therapeutic value, as it is a form of stress relieve for many who partake in it. We hope this book's tips and suggestions will help you to develop a green thumb that you can be proud of!

# **Chapter 1 - Preparations for Growing a Square Foot Garden**

One of the main preparations is deciding where you are going to set up your garden and what type of setup you will choose. A good choice for a new gardener, that is easy to maintain, is an elevated boxed or square foot garden. If this is your choice and you have a dog, you should have some kind of fencing around it, as you don't want your doggy pooping on your new organic garden. Even though we use other animal manure as organic matter to help feed the garden soil, doggy doo-doo is not on that list. I, myself, am building a boxed-in, raised garden and I will be fencing it in to keep my dog out of my garden.

## **Building a Square Foot Garden**

If you have any leftover wood from a previous project, you could use it to build the frame of your garden. I am using wood leftover from a fence we built last year. You should choose a spot for your garden where it is protected from the elements, such as wind and frost. Also, make sure it is in a spot where it will receive plenty of sunshine with easy water access and is close to your kitchen, if possible. For your frame, cut eight four foot lengths. You should try to use two by six cedar or pressure treated wood. Nail four of the planks together then repeat with the other four as the second tier. You can reinforce them by putting heavy gauge hinges in the corners. The sides of your frame should be twelve inches deep. Spread some newspaper at the bottom to help suppress weeds from growing there. Put your frame in your chosen spot and then, fill the frame with soil.

You now have a garden that is waiting to be planted. Finding out what type of produce grows best in your area is something you should research to find out what should be planted earlier in the season and what should be planted later in the season. These are things you will have to learn if you want to become a true green thumb!

## **Feeding Your Soil**

Before you start doing any planting you first should feed your soil by mixing in organic matter, such as compost, animal manure, and shredded leaves. Minerals and fertilizers, such as rock phosphate and agricultural lime should be added once in a while, but the best thing for you to do is to add organic matter. By using organic matter in your garden, you are providing your soil with a source of nutrients and nitrogen, which the plants need to grow. Organic matter is also a rich food source for microbes. These organisms make the nutrients available to the plants by carrying out the process of decay.

## **Making Our Soil Healthy**

Most of us are not blessed with the perfect soil for gardening. But there are things that we can do to make our soil healthy for gardening. If your soil is too sandy or stony, there is no need to worry because there are steps that you can take to change this, once you understand the components that make a healthy soil.

## **Composition of Soil**

Soil is basically composed of water, air, organic matter, and weathered rock. The hidden signs of a healthy soil are the small animals or organisms, insects, worms and microbes that will flourish when the elements in the soil are in balance. Just about half of your soil is made up of weathered stone, which has been broken down over time by the elements of rain, wind, thawing, and freezing, as well as other biological and chemical factors.

Soil type is usually judged by the size of the inorganic soil particles. The texture of your soil is determined by the amount of clay, silt, or sand particles that are in it. This, in turn, will affect how well your soil drains and the amount of nutrients that are available. This will affect how your plants in your garden will grow.

## **Organic Matter**

This is made up of the partially decomposed remains of plant life and soil organisms. This includes such things as trees, moss, grass, leaves, and other vegetative matter. Even though the organic matter in your soil only makes up 5% to 10% of your soil, it is a very essential part of creating healthy gardening soil.

Organic matter is also a great food source for soil life, such as microorganisms. You can increase organic matter in your soil by adding mulches, peat moss, compost, and green manures. Most roots of plants are found in the top 6 inches of soil, so you should concentrate on this part of your garden soil.

The soil organisms, such as protozoa, earthworms, bacteria, and nematodes are all very important in helping a plant to grow. They help to convert organic matter into vitamins, disease suppressing compounds, hormones and nutrients, all of which plants need to grow. The soil is bound together by the excretions of soil organisms. You must learn how to make the ideal conditions for the organisms to do their work.

Provide them with plenty of food, preferably organic matter. Make sure to aerate the soil and provide it with water, but not too much. By aerating the soil, it will help in being a source of atmospheric nitrogen, which your plants will make use of. Try to cover your garden with organic matter and remember to make sure that you are not stepping on your plants and never work the soil when it is wet.

### **Divide Box into Sections**

Divide the box into four one foot sections. Using tacks and string you can make a grid dividing the box up, running the strings in a parallel fashion across the box. In each one foot space, plant a different vegetable or herb. Try to put the plants that will be the taller ones at the north end, so they won't block the light for the other smaller plants. You should probably only put one tomato plant in a box as they tend to grow quite large, so they need more space. Of course, you can train them by putting bamboo poles in and string them up to the pole so they will grow upwards. Smaller plants such as herbs you will be able to put quite a few in one square.

Once you have your garden planted, you can then remove the grid string. When your garden begins to fill out, the different plants from the different squares will intertwine with one another making a lovely quilt-like effect, which is very pleasing to the eye. When planting your seeds, check the instructions on the packets to see how much space is needed for the seeds you are planting.

You don't want to overcrowd your garden. As your seedlings grow, thin them out.

If you are trying your hand at growing a garden for the first time, the square foot garden is relatively small, so it won't overwhelm you. You will be able to maintain it with relative ease. You will be able to utilize most or all of the space for growing vegetables and herbs. This is a great way to introduce yourself into the world of gardening by starting with a square foot garden. You can start small and expand your

garden when you are ready. When the time comes, you can just make another box and continue with your square foot gardening techniques.

The square foot gardening is a great set up if you have pets. This will separate their part of the yard from your garden. Putting some wire fencing, such as chicken wire, around the border of the garden will help to encourage your pets to stay out of the garden. We must try to keep our pets from pooping in the garden, as well as making sure they are not digging up the garden. I know my own dog has a great love for digging holes to bury her bones, so I am building a fence around my own square foot garden to keep my dog's poop and bones out of my square foot garden. This is going to be my little piece of green paradise. The rest will be the dogs, but this little part is going to be for me and for me alone to enjoy.

### **Water Barrel**

It is a good idea to invest in a water barrel to help supply the water to your garden. This way, you are saving on your water bill by using rain water to provide the water supply for your garden. Try to set up your barrel close to your garden, giving you easy access to your water supply. Make sure there is a screen on your water barrel to keep out mosquitoes, as they are attracted to stagnant water, where they lay their eggs. So, to keep from attracting the mosquitoes, make sure you have a screen on your barrel, so you won't be eaten alive while trying to water your paradise of green! This is a great way for you to make use of the natural resources to help keep your square foot garden growing, while being environmentally friendly in the process. Perhaps once you get more comfortable with gardening and you start to expand your area of operations, maybe you should think about getting a composter. This would be a great way for you to supply your garden with organic matter to feed the soil and plants. But for your first shot at gardening, you can buy some compost at local gardening supply store. They will be able to supply you with what is needed to get your garden up and growing in a healthy fashion.



## **Chapter 2 - Planting Companion Plants Together**

It is a really good idea when you are deciding what kinds of plants you want for your garden that you try to pair up plants that will complement each other. Basically, companion plants are plants that don't have the same needs. An example of companion plants would be beets and bush beans; beets are deep rooted and bush beans are shallow rooted. These are good companion plants because they will not be competing for the same space for their roots, so they will grow well together because there is no root competition. Another good set of companion plants is putting light feeders with heavy feeders, such as carrots and cucumbers. Carrots are light feeders and cucumbers are heavy feeders, so the competition for the soil nutrients is lessened by planting your garden in such a way that companion plants are beside each other.

### **Growing Up**

There are plants that are more than happy to grow upwards, if you give them some support by using nylon fencing, trellis, wire cages, poles and string to help keep them tied to the supports. If you plant cucumbers near a nylon fence, they will go straight and will be much easier to pick this way. If you use a tomato cage or other supports, your tomato plants will produce more fruit if they are kept off the ground by using some form of support for them. Beans and peas will wrap themselves around fence or support, growing upward toward the sky. The heavier plants in your garden will need extra support to grow upward. Make sure to check your supports, adding more string to your plants as they get bigger. After extra windy or stormy days, check and make readjustments to supports if they have fallen down due to weather conditions.

### **List of Companion Plants**

Take the time to research what types of plants you are interested in growing in your square box garden and learn what areas within the garden box they would do best in, such as putting larger plants on the north side of the box so they are not blocking the sun from the smaller species. If you make a list of the plants you want to grow, then find out which ones within your list would make good companion plants for each other. Remember, before planting them, make sure you read what the spacing should be between seeds. Having a game plan from start to finish on setting up your garden will definitely increase your odds of having a successful harvest.

Putting a grid running across the top of your garden box soil will help in keeping your plants organized. You must follow directions of how many seeds to plant within each 1 foot grid to make sure you avoid overcrowding by throwing in too many seeds. Have your companion plants all paired up before you start planting, so you can make sure that the right seeds are going next to their companion. Try to follow these steps in an easy and organized fashion and you will be well on your way to becoming a green thumb. Remember to throw some plants in that will help to deter the insects that you do not want hanging around your garden plants. Marigolds are good at keeping some insects away because insects don't like the odor marigolds give off. Perhaps you should think about planting some marigolds around or close to your garden box to keep the pesky bugs away from your garden.

### **Introducing Children to Gardening.**

If you are interested in starting to get your child or children interested in gardening, making a square foot garden is a great way to introduce children to gardening. You can give them a couple of their own squares within the box and let them choose what plants they would like to grow. This is a great way to bond with your child, while learning how to grow your own garden together. This could be a very special project that will be something that you will both look back on fondly for years to come.

If your child shows great interest in gardening, you can both plan what you want in your garden as a project you both do together for many years to come. This would be a great learning lesson for your child because when they grow up and move out on their own they will know how to set up a square foot garden so they will be able to continue this great tradition in growing their own produce that is organic, healthy and economical as well. You can build a special connection with each other in building this little box of green paradise together.

This would be a great, positive activity for your child to be involved with. Rather than spending way too much time playing video games, this will get them out of the house, outside breathing the fresh air and getting connected with nature in a hands-on way. Even people who are disabled or in a wheelchair can do square foot gardening. An outside table can have a garden box placed on top of it, so a person in a wheelchair can access it. This would be a great form of therapy, as gardening has a very calming effect on many people. Growing a garden can give many people great

pride and satisfaction in being able to grow their own little green piece of paradise with their own two hands.

What a great feeling when you are able to create this lovely little garden that is producing wonderful produce that you can eat, knowing that it hasn't been sprayed with chemicals, but is truly in its natural form. This is a positive step toward providing your family with a food source that is organic and fresh. You can feel good in knowing that you really know what is in the food you are serving your family when you set it down in front of them, all because you decided to build a square foot garden. Little did you know so many positive things could result from deciding to make a garden box and grow your own produce.

It is not only a great way to relax and get away from everyday stress, but it is also going to cut down on your overall grocery bill, once you start to yield a harvest. There are many bonuses to starting up your own square foot garden which you and your loved ones will reap many of the benefits from it, enjoying many different organic produce that you will grow for many years to follow.

### **Involve Child with Building of Square foot Garden Box**

If you want to involve your child in the project right from the beginning, then have them assist you with the actual building of the square foot box. They can help you by handing you the boards to nail together. They can help you line up the boards by holding them in place for you. They can put the newspaper at the bottom of the box and you can make sure to explain to them why you are doing that (to help prevent weeds from growing in the box). Also, they will be able to give you a hand with filling the box with soil and they can also help put up the grid strings. They will feel much more a part of this project if they are involved with it right from the beginning. Then, they can say they built the square foot garden box with their mom or dad, which makes them feel pretty important in having a hand in the development of the garden box right from square one, so to speak.

## **Chapter 3 - Economical and Efficient**

The square foot garden box is a wonderful way to go in choice of garden design or type for so many different reasons. Two of the most important are that it is an economical and efficient way to go in garden design. Many of us in today's world do not have enough land to grow big, giant gardens that perhaps our ancestors used to grow at one time, during a period in history when everyone was still using horses and buggies. The majority of people in the world live in big cities, where space is limited, but with the square foot garden, it allows us to grow gardens in 80% less space than a conventional garden. But in this smaller garden, we are able to harvest five times more produce than the conventional garden. It takes a large garden and basically condenses it to fit into the square foot garden box.

### **Choosing What You Want to Grow**

What is wonderful about the garden box is that you are able to choose what you would like to grow so you can have your favorite choices growing in your garden box. You don't have to settle for what the choices are at the supermarket, because this is in your control now. You also don't have the worry of not knowing for sure whether the foods you are eating were sprayed with pesticides or chemicals. You will know for sure that your produce is chemical free, because you grew it yourself. Many of the back-breaking chores that come with a conventional sized garden, you won't have to do, such as digging, weeding, and tilling.

### **Square Foot Garden Suits Numerous Households Gardening Needs**

Your garden will be low maintenance, but will yield much organic produce for you in a little space. I think this is the best garden design that suits so many different households' gardening needs. It is not labor intensive, like a conventional garden with all the weeding and digging and tilling. I am glad to say no thanks to all the back breaking work that is involved in taking care of a conventional size garden. With the square foot garden you are able to enjoy the wonderful benefits of having your own garden without going through pain and agony to maintain it.

This is a great size garden for those that are single or have small families. There are many people today that do not have a family. They may just be living with someone or they could be single and living on their own. Just because someone

doesn't have a family does not mean that they are any less interested in taking up gardening in a small scale, by building themselves a square foot garden box. People of all walks of life are getting into square foot gardening because it is a garden that suits the needs of many. Adding some real plant life to your surroundings can really improve the look of the area where you are growing it.

### **A Garden That Can Be Grown Just About Anywhere**

It can be grown anywhere, from an apartment rooftop to on top of a table and everywhere in between. There are places in cities where buildings once stood, but were knocked down because they were no longer safe. People started growing urban inner city gardens, many following the square foot design. These once ugly, empty spaces, that were not getting used, are now filled with the colors of life and that is what the square foot garden brought to these rundown areas. They not only became functioning community gardens, but they brought the people of the community together.

### **Donating a Square Foot Garden**

Here's a great way to help others in areas that are in need of some help. Donate square foot gardens to those living in poorer neighborhoods, allowing the people to take care of their garden and provide food for themselves through growing produce in their own square foot garden. Many people would love the chance to have a square foot garden to grow produce for themselves. Instead of going to food kitchens or food banks, they could start growing their own foods, which would cut down on their expenses.

This, I think, would be a great idea for a project that helps people become self-sufficient and find ways to get off the system. This would be a step in the right direction, helping people grow their own produce. This is something that can help build up their self-confidence in knowing that they can do positive things in their life, like growing their own produce in their very own square foot garden. We need to come up with positive ways to encourage those who may be have a hard time. By offering them a square foot garden, we are helping others to make some positive changes in their lives.

By growing their own garden, they could accomplish some positive goals in growing some of their own foods. I am not suggesting that by growing a square foot garden, it will solve all their problems, but it can give them a little piece of hope towards a better and brighter future. This will allow people who could not otherwise get fresh produce in their diet or not very often. This way, they will be helping to

contribute to their own diet by growing some healthy foods for themselves. Maybe these could be added to yards in low income homes or make a smaller size for people to grow on their balconies.

## Chapter 4 - Plants That Grow Well in Square Foot Garden

One of the easiest plants to grow in a square foot garden is lettuce, as it can grow in a four to five inch area between plants. It doesn't require much room and even doesn't seem to mind crowding. It is best to grow lettuce in early Spring or Fall, if shade is provided. There are heat tolerant varieties that will grow in the Summer. It is a good idea to start the seeds growing in one and a half inch plastic cells and then transplant the mature seedlings into the garden. The only real pest that bothers lettuce is slugs; try and pick regularly at early morning or evening to keep the slugs at bay. Below is a list of various produce that grows well in box gardens:

1. **Salad Bowl.** This is a great choice for a loose leaf selection. It is good for the beginner gardener, as it is low maintenance. For this lettuce, you should leave six to seven inches between plants. A few of these plants will yield more than one individual can eat. Better as a Spring lettuce.
2. **Green Ice.** This is a super, fast growing, loose leaf type of lettuce that's great for early Spring gardens.
3. **Chicken Lettuce.** This is a loose leaf lettuce, but it grows like a Romaine lettuce. It is good for early Spring, as it is not very heat tolerant. When it begins to warm up, remove plants.
4. **Butter-crunch.** It is the standard by which all other Butter-head type lettuce is judged. This type of lettuce grows well in any part of the growing season. It is a good choice for Summer planting, as it is fairly heat tolerant.
5. **St. Blaise.** This lettuce is best suited for early Spring and Fall growth. It is a Romaine type. It is one of the best varieties for extending the growing season. It is a great choice for Fall planting.
6. **Sierra.** This is a pretty versatile variety. It is best to grow in the early Spring, but it is pretty heat tolerant, but the taste or flavor becomes more bitter when grown in warmer season. It is also a great choice for growing in the Fall season. This lettuce has the growth pattern of a Butter-head, but is listed as a Romaine type.
7. **Esmeralda.** This is known as a Butter-head type. It's growth habit is larger than Butter-crunch. This is a good lettuce to plant in the Spring.
8. **Croquerelle du Midi.** This is a type of lettuce to grow during the Summer months. It will grow throughout the season. It is an all-season lettuce. It has the growth habit of a small Romaine.
9. **Green Towers.** This is a lettuce that can be planted in late Spring. It reaches maturity the fastest out of all the Romaine varieties. It is also good at handling the heat for late Spring planting.
10. **Nevada.** This forms large open heads, instead of tight heads, like the traditional Iceberg lettuce. It is a French crisp-head type that's good to plant in the Spring or Fall.
11. **Jeriche.** This is an excellent heat tolerant type of Romaine. It is smaller in size than the regular Romaine.

12. **Red Deer Tongue.** This has a Butter-crunch growth habit. It's best to grow in the Spring. It has five to six inch leaves that have pointy edges.
13. **Atoll.** It has the texture and flavor that is similar to the Nevada. Also like the Nevada, it needs light for seeds.
14. **Radishes.** Make sure to put them two inches apart. A great variety to grow in box gardens is "Champion." It does not get a woody flavor as it reaches maturity, as other varieties tend to do.
15. **Peas.** Try to put three inches between the plants. A great variety is "English Peas." You cannot beat the lovely flavor of freshly picked garden peas. You can grow them on a trellis in the Spring or early Spring if the weather is good. After you have harvested them, you can plant bush green beans in late Summer and early Fall in the same spot.
16. **Mr. Big Pea.** You should make sure you have a strong trellis for these peas; they are slow in growing, but will give you a great harvest.
17. **Broccoli.** Make sure to have at least eighteen inches apart. This plant will yield two crops for you, one in Spring and another in the Fall. The "Packman" variety has an excellent size head.
18. **Carrots.** You should space your carrots four inches apart. These are an ideal crop for a raised or box garden. They can be planted in Spring and Late Summer for a Fall harvest. The "Scarlet Nantes" variety grow fast and are able to grow in rocky and clay soil.
19. **Cucumber.** You can train cucumbers to grow upward on such things as tomato cages. The "Euricka Hybrid" is a good variety to grow in a box garden.
20. **Bush Green Beans.** Try to leave four inches between the plants. They will produce well in small spaces.
21. **Lima Beans.** Grow these vertically so they don't take up too much space, but make sure they have strong support to hold them up. A good variety of these is "King of the Garden." It will grow well in a box garden.
22. **Cauliflower.** Try to space them about sixteen inches apart. Best time to grow is in the cooler season. You can get two crops, one in early Spring and the other in Fall. The "Snow Crown" variety grows well.
23. **Onions.** Grow them four inches apart; they have no particular light requirement. The best variety to grow is "Candy."
24. **Roma.** This is a very hardy variety of tomato, and is really great for making sauces as it has a low water content.

Another great idea is to seek out vendors in your area that supply heritage seeds, also known as heirloom seeds. These are becoming quite popular as a hobby in growing for many gardeners. These vegetables have a unique appearance and flavor. You can keep unusual varieties such as these alive for new generations to come. There are many heritage varieties, such as peppers, tomatoes, beans and much more. Adding habitats for birds, bees, and butterflies will help to keep the pesky bugs at bay, as well as helping to pollinate your garden. Plant some marigolds and milkweeds in your garden; marigolds will help keep unwanted bugs away due to their odor, and milkweeds will help to support monarch butterflies, whose numbers have depleted greatly. Putting a birdhouse near your garden will help to draw birds for neighbors who can help to keep the pest numbers down that will be attacking your garden.



# **Chapter 5 - Environmentally Friendly Hobby**

Starting a square foot garden is a great choice for those who are looking for a hobby that is environmentally friendly. If you are trying to leave a green footprint by participating in things that are going to help improve the environment, then starting an organic square foot garden would be a good start to that goal. This compact garden will be beneficial, not only to yourself in supplying you with a chemical-free food source, but it is also a fun, relaxing, environmentally-friendly hobby.

## **Low Cost Hobby**

Many hobbies can become very expensive, not only for paying for the initial membership, but also other costs involved, such as equipment costs, supply costs, and transportation costs to get back and forth to where hobby is held. But with growing a square foot garden, the costs are relatively low. The first year, you may have to pay for the wood to construct the frame of your square foot garden. But, there is a good chance you can get scraps of wood from somewhere to build your frame. You will need some string to make your grid and a few bags of soil, which are around a dollar a bag on average.

Get some seeds which you can begin to grow in recycled containers, such as paper egg cartons, which work very well for growing your seeds. You do not need any big gardening tools, as you will not need to do any weeding or tilling or digging. You can use scraps of wood to make some trellises to support the plants that will need it. If you get a water barrel and composter, this will cut down on your water expenses and compost by using the rain water and making your own compost to use on your garden. Even without having these, it is still a low cost hobby from which you will reap many benefits, beyond just being a relaxing hobby for you.

## **Shared Hobby with Loved Ones**

This is a hobby that you can share with your loved ones, such as your children. Growing a square foot garden could be a hobby that you and your loved ones could share together. What a wonderful thing to accomplish together, creating a wonderful organic garden. Growing a square foot garden with loved ones can give you a common ground where you can open up the lines of communication with each other, discussing and sharing what your individual ideas and plans are for the garden. Putting your minds and ideas together in making a garden is something you and your

loved ones can be proud of. This is a great hobby to enjoy with your loved ones that is low cost and environmentally friendly.

### **Teaching Our Children the Importance of Caring for the Environment**

This is a really good way to show your children how to grow their own food and be aware of their surroundings. You will be helping them to get involved in hobbies or projects that are not going to cause negative effects on the environment. This is a hobby that will not stretch your family budget, but will eventually save you money on your shopping costs, once you and your loved ones begin to harvest the benefits of your shared hobby. Perhaps some of the money you save on food costs you could put toward a composter and rain barrel for the following year of gardening. These, of course, would be great investments, as you will get your water supply from the rain water and save on water costs by getting a rain barrel. By getting a composter, you will help to lessen your amount of rubbish going to the landfill by putting your organic waste in a composter, which will eventually make some compost for you to use in feeding your garden soil and plants.

This would be a wonderful hobby that you and your loved ones would benefit from in so many ways. Showing your children positive ways to treat their surroundings is a very important life lesson for them, as they are the future leaders of our world. We must instill in them today how important looking after the environment is to each and every living thing that resides here on Mother Earth.

## **Chapter 6 - Organic Compared to GM (Genetically Modified) Foods**

By supplying your own organic food source instead of relying on GM foods, you will be giving yourself a superior quality of nutrition compared to continuing to eat GM foods. Most foods that you are buying in the local grocery stores today are GM foods, as well as having been sprayed with chemicals. So when you are eating these foods, you are not just eating the fruits or vegetables, but you are also consuming the chemicals that they have been sprayed with. You really have no idea what kind or amount of chemicals have been sprayed on your produce from local stores or markets. If they do not have organic on them advertised, then it is more than likely that they are GM foods that have been sprayed with chemicals. With starting your square foot garden, you will not have to worry about these concerns any longer as you will not be using any chemicals on your organic garden. Your produce will be all natural, with no additives of any kind. You will feel good in knowing that you are feeding yourself and loved ones only pure 100% organic food.

**There have been many health factors connected to GM foods such as the following:**

- Lowered Nutrition
- Birth defects and shorter life span
- Interior toxins
- Resurgence of infectious diseases
- Antibiotic threat via plants
- Antibiotic threat via milk
- Super viruses
- Viral and bacterial illness
- Infertility and high infant mortality rates with animals fed GM
- Direct cancer and degenerative links
- Cancer and degenerative diseases
- Near deaths and food allergy reactions
- Recorded deaths from GM

**Organic foods on the other hand will offer many benefits such as the following:**

- No artificial flavoring
- No food coloring
- No antibiotics
- No hormones
- This includes fruit, vegetables, nuts, seeds and meat

When you read all the bad health affects that eating genetically modified foods can have on us it is pretty scary to say the least, especially when we really have no idea what kind of chemicals or how much was sprayed on the GM foods we are buying to feed ourselves and families. Organic food is much more healthier overall for us, so if we can add this to our diet just by building a square foot garden to help supply us with healthy foods, then what are we waiting for? I have seen only positive reasons that support growing our own organic food. The best way for us to consume foods is to eat them in their most natural form. This includes not cooking them, as this can take much of the nutrients out of the foods. If we grow our own gardens, we will be lowering the risk of suffering from the side effects that can be caused with consuming GM foods.

### **Get Led Down the Garden Path Toward Healthy Living**

We must try to take positive action in our lives, where we are making the best healthy choices that we can for ourselves and our families. Deciding to build your own square foot garden could make such a difference in your life in so many positive ways. This could be a wonderful hobby that you could enjoy for many years to come. Why not take that first step toward living a healthier lifestyle and make the commitment to build your own garden box that will be a hobby that brings you great peace and joy? Why continue taking the chance of risking your health further by continuing to choose to eat GM foods?

### **Growing of GM Foods is Banned in Many Countries**

Many countries in the world today have banned the practice of growing GM foods, but unfortunately, Canada and most of America are not on this list of countries. In fact, Canada is one of the world's biggest suppliers of GM canola. Hopefully, we will get smarter and stop using GM foods worldwide. It would be wonderful to have a worldwide ban on GM foods. But, unfortunately, it is highly unlikely that this will happen, and if it does, it is not going to be anytime soon. So, in the meantime, we must look after our own individual garden patches. We can start our own bans in

refusing to buy GM foods from the suppliers anymore. Instead, we can grow our own organic foods that are a healthier choice by far over GM foods. Getting back to the basics is a really good way to live. Not all of us are going to adapt a Mennonite way of living, but we can do things, such as growing a natural simple box garden. This experience will give us a little taste of getting back to basics in learning how to grow and supply our own organic foods, picking them fresh from our garden to our tables.

## Chapter 7 - Horticultural Therapy

Gardening has been recognized all over the world as a great form of therapy for many years. If you are someone who is suffering from some kind of ailment or disability, a great way to cope would be to consider having a square foot garden to offer you a wonderful known form of therapy. Having a box garden will offer you a way to exercise your body, while stimulating your mind, as well as offering you immense comfort in working with plants. Maybe you are someone who may be suffering from depression. This is a great way to help perk you up and build up your self-confidence by creating your own lovely garden.

Having a garden in your life can give you so many positive benefits. You will feel so much better in knowing you are doing something to make your health improve by growing an organic garden of your own. You are taking affirmative action toward helping yourself heal, both mentally and physically, through taking up gardening as a hobby/therapy, while growing your own healthy foods. You will get so much pleasure as you get more into your garden and the tending of it. The great thing with the square foot garden is it will not overwhelm you with its size. Quite the contrary, you will feel comfortable in the fact that it is low maintenance. No heavy physical work is involved with this compact garden. But, even though it is small in size, it literally is overflowing with good therapeutic benefits for you to enjoy. You will find it most calming and relaxing, when you plant your seedlings of your produce; then, being able to watch those seedlings progress until you get to finally harvest their crops and receive all the nutrients and vitamins, as well as other healthy contents they will provide for you. When you are having a stressful day, you can go out and take some time to relax and enjoy your garden. Just putting your hands in the dirt and planting your seedlings you will find very soothing and calming.

### **A Positive Distraction.**

Having a garden is a wonderful distraction of other things that may be causing you physical and emotional pain. The garden is a great way to work at something that is giving you a sense of calming pleasure and it allows you to get away from your everyday worries and stresses. Just getting that time out from the other negative things that could be going on in your life is a great help in aiding you with getting through the day and moving forward to a more positive and healthier way of living. You will become, at times, so wrapped up in the tending of your beloved garden, that it will give you temporary relief of other stresses you may have to deal with in your life. Your square foot garden can be your little piece of paradise. When you need to have some peace and quiet, you can go and putter around in your garden tending to your plants. When your plants are growing healthy and strong, you will get a natural high

out of watching them grow eventually to supply you with a variety of organic foods. Having a garden will help the quality of your life to improve. By interacting with your plants, it will help to improve your overall well-being. Having your own garden can give you your own little piece of heaven that will improve your outlook on life in general, from one that may have been negative, to one that is more positive, once you start to reap the benefits from your garden. By starting your own square foot garden, you are going to be a positive influence for those around you. When others see how well you have done in your life, just by introducing gardening into your life, they, too, will want a piece of this good life, too. You will be able to advise others about the wonderful world of square foot gardening. Before you know it, friends and family could be following your great example and may also want to start their own organic gardens. Who knows? Your good words on square foot gardening could spread like weeds through your community, getting more people interested in organic gardening.

# Conclusion

We certainly hope that you will make use of the suggestions and advice within this e-book by starting your own square foot garden as a wonderful hobby that you will benefit from in so many ways, for many years to come. You can choose to do this as a family project or hobby or perhaps, you want to have some alone time and just do your gardening on your own. Whatever way you decide, you are going to approach this healthy world of organic gardening is a step in the right direction. If you are a first time gardener, then you couldn't ask for a better way to try your hand at gardening than doing the square foot garden. It is a favorite design choice in first time gardeners.

The beautiful thing about this design of garden is you can easily expand just by adding another box. It is that simple. You will be so glad that you have chosen to take up this environmentally friendly hobby that will make your quality of life so much better. Eating organic foods basically spells "healthy." You cannot do any better than eating foods in their natural form. Another great bonus is no GM foods and your organic foods from your garden will be chemical-free. The best medicine for your body is food that is all-natural, 100% organic. You can't get any better than Mother Nature at her best.

The great thing about the square foot garden is you do not need a giant piece of land to set up your garden. This is a great compact design that most people can fit into their lives without hardship. Remember to get organic seeds, because the seeds could be GM seeds, which you do not want if you are doing your organic garden completely organic from start to finish.

Starting your own garden is going to be such a positive step toward your overall health that you will be so glad you took that step and decided to build your own square foot garden. No longer are gardens only for those who have big pieces of property. The inner city square foot garden is perfect for those of us who live in city, but would love to have our own fresh organic foods that we grew ourselves. Well, now, you have the information you need to get started on your own square foot garden. You can check on the internet for suppliers that sell organic seeds in your area. We wish you great health and happiness and hope that you decide to get



yourself a green thumb by setting up a square foot garden for you and your loved ones to reap the benefits from.

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